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Customer Engagement and Customer Knowledge Management in B2B

Marketing

Coinvolgimento E Gestione Della Conoscenza Del Cliente Nel Marketing B2B

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Astratto

Background: Il marketing business-to-business (B2B) è costituito da più parti come il comportamento della clientela e il processo decisionale manageriale di marketing. L'analisi errata dei dati e la mancata considerazione della gestione della conoscenza del cliente (CKM) costano alle organizzazioni B2B all'anno.

Scopo: lo studio esplorativo del singolo caso studio si è concentrato sulla creazione di un'esplorazione dettagliata della sfida che alcuni dirigenti responsabili delle tattiche strategiche di marketing i quali hanno una scarsa conoscenza di come utilizzare gli approcci di gestione della conoscenza per coinvolgere meglio i propri clienti (CE) nel marketing B2B.

Metodologia: La capacità dinamica e l'opportunità tecnologico costituiscono il quadro concettuale del recente lavoro. La popolazione era un gruppo manageriale responsabile della gestione del marketing di un'organizzazione di simulazione/formazione industriale. I dati vengono raccolti da dirigenti a diversi livelli di responsabilità in un'organizzazione B2B, interviste semi-strutturate insieme alla convalida/osservazione dei partecipanti. Per analizzare i dati sono stati utilizzati i metodi di condensazione sistematica del testo e di codifica dei temi di Giorgi, seguiti dal software NVivo V.12.

Risultati: I temi emersi hanno evidenziato l'esigenza di migliorare l'approccio al marketing. I temi includono il piano/strategia CKM formale, la progettazione/acquisto di uno strumento CKM, l'istruzione e la formazione delle procedure CKM, nonché l'istituzione, il mantenimento, la promozione e la coltivazione di relazioni. I beneficiari del presente studio sono policy makers, responsabili della strategia organizzativa, professionisti del marketing e responsabili del marketing. L'implicazione per i cambiamenti sociali include la determinazione degli approcci richiesti dai leader aziendali per migliorare l'EC.

Conclusioni: Affrontare le sfide nell'adozione delle tattiche strategiche CKM può migliorare il CE nelle organizzazioni B2B.

Parole chiave: marketing B2B; CKM; CE; Tattiche strategiche di marketing.

Abstract

Background: Business-to-business marketing (B2B) consists of multiple parts such as clienteles' behavior and marketing managerial decision-making process. Incorrect data analysis and taking no account of customer knowledge management (CKM) cost organizations B\$ per year.

Purpose: The explorative single-case study was focused on establishing a detailed exploration of the challenge that some executives responsible for marketing strategic tactics have the little knowledge of how to utilize knowledge management approaches to make better engaging their customers (CE) in the B2B marketing.

Methodology: The dynamic capability and technological opportunism comprise the conceptual framework in the recent work. The population was a managerial group responsible for marketing management of an industrial simulation/training organization. Data are collected from executives at different levels of accountability in a B2B organization, semi-structured interview along with participant validation/observation. To analyze data, the Giorgi's systematic text condensation and coding methods of themes were used, followed by NVivo V.12 software.

Results: The emerged themes uncovered a requirement to make better a marketing approach. The themes include the formal CKM plan/strategy,

designing/purchasing a CKM tool, education and training of CKM procedures, as well as establishment, maintaining, promoting, and cultivating relationships. Beneficiaries of the current study are policy makers, organizational strategy makers, marketing practitioners, and marketing managers. Implication for social changes includes determining the approaches that business leaders require to enhance CE.

Conclusion: Addressing challenges in adopting CKM strategic tactics can improve CE in B2B organizations.

Keywords: B2B marketing; CKM; CE; Marketing strategic tactics.

List of Terminology

CKM – Customer knowledge management

CRM– Customer relationship management

KM– knowledge management

CE– Customer engagement

B2B– Business-to-business

B2C – business-to-consumer

ROI– Return on investment

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INTRODUCTION

Business-to-business (B2B) marketing is a process that involves selling a special product manufactured by one company to another company and includes several parts, such as end-users' desires, B2B clients' behavior, and decision-making process by managers. For a B2B marketing professional, the customer voice presents a distinctive factor to think about partners' desires. Companies using the customer voice can accelerate the economic growth, achieving competitive advantages relative to other companies. Paying no attention to the customer voice and then the incorrect interpretation of data can cost companies B\$ per year. It was revealed a pattern shift towards the relationship quality in the seller-buyer interactions, suggesting a key shift in B2B strategies to customer relationship management (CRM). This shift involves integrating data derived from both end-users and partners/customers in B2B. Managers get started to gathered psychographic and demographic data around buying habit in their customers by CRM during the early 2000s. Nowadays, CRM is ranked 3th in marketing instruments and about 97% of the top organizations and companies have adopted CRM, only 3% of the small B2B companies chose to utilize CRM. However, my overview of the previous reports indicated inconsistency of data credibility on *customer knowledge management* (CKM), an integration of CRM and knowledge management (KM) in organizational topics. It was reported 70% as the failure rate

of CKM in a wide range of companies, suggesting a need for research attempts to support a multi-dimensional scrutiny of the interaction between *customer engagement* (CE) and organizational and national cultures. Collaborative approaches originated from CKM strategic tactics may lead to consumer trust and eventually increase customer lifetime value, i.e., the total worth to a business of a customer over the period of their relationship.

In Chapter I, the literature review of "the CKM in B2B marketing towards CE" will be represented, with the purpose of introducing the phenomenon and highlighting both its potential values and the restrictions during current years.

In Chapter II, the theoretical framework on "the CKM in B2B marketing towards CE" will be provided.

In Chapter III will be entirely dedicated to data analysis, results, and conclusion.

Chapter I

A REVIEW OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC LITERATURE

In this Chapter, a literature review of the B2B marketing, CKM, and CE will be provided for introducing the topic of my analysis. In the sections of the first Chapter, I will provide a brief on the past of CKM, the importance of CKM in the 21st century, associations among KM, CRM, and CKM, CE theory, shifting from B2C towards B2B marketplace, voice customer and word-of-mouth marketing, the Lean Six Sigma process, and CKM in supply chains. Moreover, the section of CKM instruments/tools includes marketing return on investment, data mining process, profits and risks, and social networks. Dynamic capability and technological opportunism are included in the section of organizational psychology. To conclude, the study will focus on the challenges found in the context of low knowledge of marketing managers for utilizing CKM technology to make better CE in the B2B marketing. This literature review is imperative to formulate the research question.

1.1. Get starting in the Literature Review

I carried out a literature review to achieve a better insight on B2B, CKM, and CE as well as to design a conceptual framework for the second Chapter. Throughout the exploration of peer-reviewed books and articles reported by marketing specialists, I evaluated the various outlooks around this question: What CKM tactics do B2B leaders utilize for improving CE? In this regard, I reviewed academic literature around the concepts of the shift to CKM in the 21st century, customer retention, dynamic capability, and technological opportunism. In fact, I reviewed CKM in the supply chain, relationship between the network components, and the available CKM tools.

Analysis on the peer-reviewed books and articles could provide awareness around how marketing scholars and researchers look at CKM technology and the related topics. I started the primary exploring for book chapters, doctoral researches, and journal articles in the UNIVPM research database in the contexts of B2B, B2C, CRM, CKM, CE, etc. An initial search from PsycINFO (a database of literature in the field of psychology), SAGE Premier, Management Resources of Emerald publisher, and ProQuest's ABI/INFORM (a database covering economics, management, business, and a wide range of associated fields) identified several articles harboring the association between B2B tactics and those of B2C, current and past practices on B2B, and B2B theories. Supplementary search using

multidisciplinary databases such as Google Scholar, Science Direct, ProQuest, and Academic Search Complete from EBSCO (a multi-disciplinary database) provided the potential sources for a comprehensive review of CKM practices in B2B marketing. Peer-reviewed resources on organizational psychology, buying behaviors, marketing tactics, voice customer, social networking, B2B marketing, CKM, and CE came up in my searches.

1.2 Organizing Information of the Previous Literature

I utilized the below keywords and terms for the initial searches: customer relationship management (CRM), knowledge management (KM), customer knowledge management (CKM), customer engagement (CE), business-to-business (B2B), customer voice, B2B marketing, managerial theories, competitive advantage. Keywords including internet communication technology, social networking, e-Marketplace, and e-Commerce were searched for locating literature around the importance of the Internet. The peer-reviewed literature discovered using the following terms added depth to my review: technological opportunism, dynamic capability, organizational culture, business superiority, business intelligence, value, supply chain, branding, and marketing tactics.

The review specified the important themes associated with the conceptual framework and the study question. Findings collected from various academic resources were organized into several sections, including the past of CKM, the

importance of CKM in the 21st century, associations among KM, CRM, and CKM, shifting from B2C towards B2B market, voice customer and word-of-mouth marketing, the Lean Six Sigma process, and CKM in supply chains. Moreover, the section of CKM instruments/tools includes marketing return on investment, data mining, profits and risks, and social networks. Dynamic capability and technological opportunism are included in the section of organizational psychology. This literature review is imperative to formulate the research question.

Most of the literatures used in this study are taken from peer-reviewed journal articles and remaining from professional book chapters. The publish date satisfied 5 to 10 year requirement for this research. The total of all references utilized in each category was: 110 peer-reviewed articles and 12 book chapters.

1.3 CKM History

The scope of my study harbors the tools related to CKM inside industrial businesses, i.e., the B2B sector. Some B2B executives are impotent to make use of marketing tactics in their business and thereby slower them for adopting CKM tactics (Cartwright et al. 2021). The marketplace of B2B possesses a smaller number of product offerings and customers than B2C (business-to-consumer). B2B

marketplace is composed of three sections: government, institution, and industrial business (Lee et al. 2021).

Marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association as the activity for creating, delivering, exchanging, and communicating offerings that have value for partners, customers, and society (Kotler et al. 2021). Profitability was appeared as an important topic marketing area, and managers realized that this topic is both the worst and the best of the managerial charges (Yarahmadi et al. 2022). The seller/buyer transactional paradigm started slowly the incorporation of client euphoria into marketing tactics when Maslow described the hierarchy of needs (Fig. 1). Years later, Webster exhibited that Maslow's theory reshaped marketing tactics from social operations into a new concept (Lussier et al. 2019).

Marketing scholars did not have the tools to uncover the complexity of multilateral business tactics during the 1950s. During the 1960s, initial attempts by these scholars disclosed the potential of seller/buyer relationships and the incorporation of marketing with marketing tactics. In the mid-1970s, a misunderstanding around B2B marketing was originated from using experimental evidences in the B2C reports. It was found that the B2C concepts utilized for studding the paradigm of B2B are unverified and unpractical. During the 1980s, McNamara remarkably incorporated to the insight of B2C and B2B marketing via uncovered that the misconception of client' properties inhibit the flourishing of

business enterprises. The author exhibited that B2C managers are more enthusiastic to utilize new tools for tactic development than B2B managers. During the 1990s, marketing tactics led to the development of simulation and data mining software packages (Wilkinson and Young, 2013). Managerial ambiguity remains around how, when, and where CKM tools can be benefit in B2B. Therefore, marketing executives still abandoned to utilize accessible tactics for engage their customers (Hadjikhani & LaPlaca, 2013). Webster described how the paradigm of marketing was reshaped from service/product offering with sale routine into the potential seller/buyer relationships (Lussier et al. 2019). The arrival of the relationship tactics to marketing area could open a tactical shift from service/product offering to customer voice in B2B marketplaces (Saarijärvi et al., 2013). Therefore, in the 2000s, the shift from transaction- centric to customer-based marketing revealed new insight for improving efforts to form the relationship concept in B2B (Ferrell and Ferrell, 2020).

Using Webster's and Maslow's theories, it was found that the shifting from B2B to relationship marketing can improve competitive advantages (Lussier et al. 2019). Moreover, it was cleared that the understanding the requirements of both end-users and clients can promote long-term and trust relationships in B2B (Bahrami et al., 2012). As a result, the concept of relationship was known as a key determinative element in encouraging businesses. Having sufficient knowledge of relationship

marketing contributes to uncover B2B tactics for achieving high profitability (Saura et al. 2021).

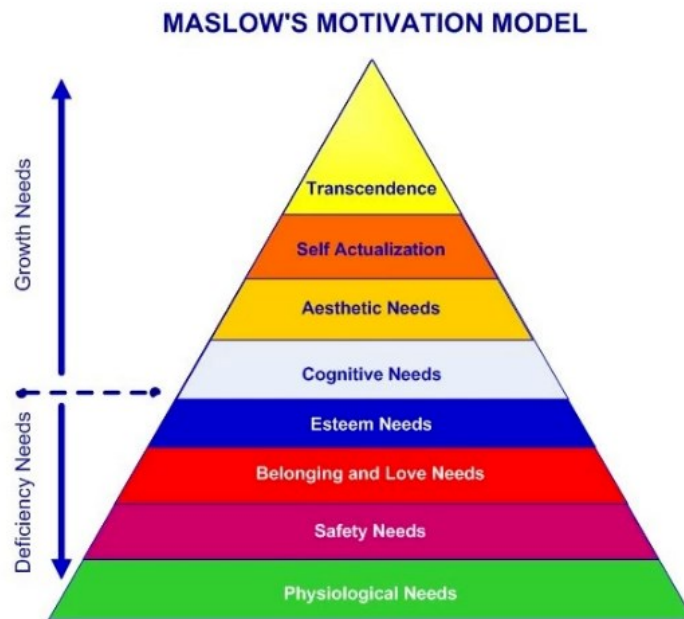


Fig. 1 Maslow's Needs (Lussier et al. 2019)

1.4 CKM Application in 21st Century

The establishment of seller/buyer marketing tactics uncovered relationships in B2B area (Saarijärvi et al., 2013). The *relationship marketing* term was born when evolving from product-originated to customer-related in marketing tactics. This term still has no definitive agreement in its definition (Steinhoff and Palmatier,

2021). Relationship marketers have access to a toolbox of technologies for managing their customer relationships, encompassing m-commerce channels, anthropomorphic agents, social networks, and big data (Steinhoff and Palmatier, 2021) (Fig. 2).

Finch et al. (2015) identified important concepts related to relationship marketing, including brand, technology, client retention, privacy, security, service quality, fidelity, experience, satisfaction, and trust. Economic, social, as well as psychological concepts figure out relationship marketing and each one can imply different association (Peters and Johnston, 2013). Imperative to defining relationship, B2B leaders must pay attention to the relationship concepts for improving and maintaining long-term client contacts (Steel and Ewing, 2017). Evidence revealed that when an organization increases customer retention by 5%, its profit can be raised 30-85% (Steinhoff and Palmatier, 2021). Overall, the behavioral sciences may move B2B leader's insight towards CRM so that Johansson and Kask (2013) described the theory of seller/buyer behavior as survival tactic inside the models of marketing. Therefore, B2B marketing can incorporate a range of organizational theories such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics, and business intelligence (Huang and Wilkinson, 2016).

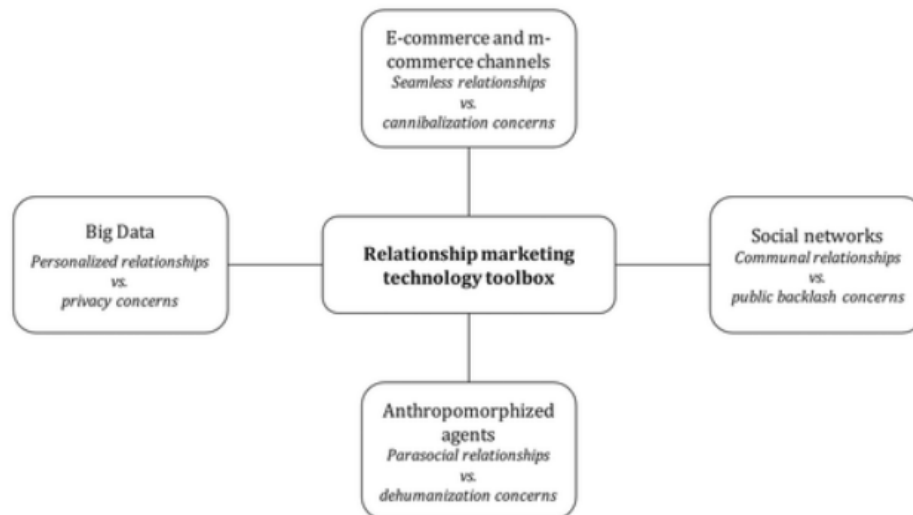


Fig. 2 Toolbox of the relationship marketing (Steinhoff and Palmatier, 2021)

1.5 Associations among KM, CRM, and CKM

CKM may be regarded as just another name for KM or CRM for most people; however, the team members of CKM require various instruments and procedures in contrast to KM as well as CRM (Mukerjee, 2018). CKM experts are most focused on “knowledge from the customer”, while CRM experts aim at “knowledge about the customer”. This means CKM leaders directly interact with their customers for gaining knowledge instead of collecting data from various databases. Also, CRM is an IT system which that it is “a technical device interacting with people who input data and information inside an IT system to obtain processed information in order to handle customer relationships” (Perna and Baraldi.2014). CKM executives,

moreover, encourage their personnel for sharing their knowledge rather than keeping it to themselves (Palmatier et al. 2018). In this regard, Chaithanapat and Rakthin (2020) summarized the differences among CKM, CRM, and KM according to the role of company, the role of customer, benefits, metrics, objectives, rationale, and knowledge. The authors indicated that the CKM leaders possess distinct mindsets around their clients. In fact, CKM executives do not consider their clients as passive recipients of a service/product and as KM leaders do. They do not only believe in client fidelity like CRM executives do (Williams et al. 2016). In other words, CKM leaders aim at how to accelerate growth and innovation for their companies via obtaining novel clients and active engagement with them (Chaithanapat and Rakthin 2020) (Table 1).

Table 1 Difference among KM, CRM, and CKM

	CRM	KM	CKM
Role of corporates	Building long term relationships with client	Encouraging personnel for sharing their knowledge with others	Emancipating client from a passive recipient of products to active co-creator

Role of customers	Captive, tied to service/product by fidelity	Passive, recipients of product	Active partners in value-creation process
Benefits	Client retention	Client satisfaction	Organizational learning, innovation, client success
Metrics	Performance against competitors in contribution, growth, and innovation to client success.	Performance against budgets	Performance in terms of client fidelity and satisfaction.
Objectives	Collaboration with client for joint value creation.	Avoidance of re-inventing the wheel, cost-saving, and efficiency gains	Maintaining company's client base, client base nurturing
Rationale	Mining knowledge around client in company's database.	Unlock and integrate personnel' knowledge around clients, sale	Gaining knowledge directly from client and sharing this knowledge.

		process, and R&D.	
Knowledge sought in	Client Database	Network of companies, company, team, employee	Client dissatisfaction, creativity, and experience with service/product

1.6 CE theory

Understanding the CE theory is needed to identify the difference between CE and other customer-related constructs. Fig. 3 displays the theory behind CE. As a service or product is presented, companies start to invest in marketing activities for creating customer awareness, which in turn can help clients recognize if the company's service or product fulfill a want. Moreover, awareness induces various expectations in the minds of the customers. After recognizing the expectation from the company, the customers make their initial purchases create their experiences. These experiences are positive if the company can exceed or meet the expectation of the customers. Once the customers have positive experiences with the service or product of the company, they would be satisfied with the company. This stratification in turn induces repeat purchases. Moreover, the positive experiences

that the customers have with the company lead to attachment emotion (Palmatier et al. 2018).

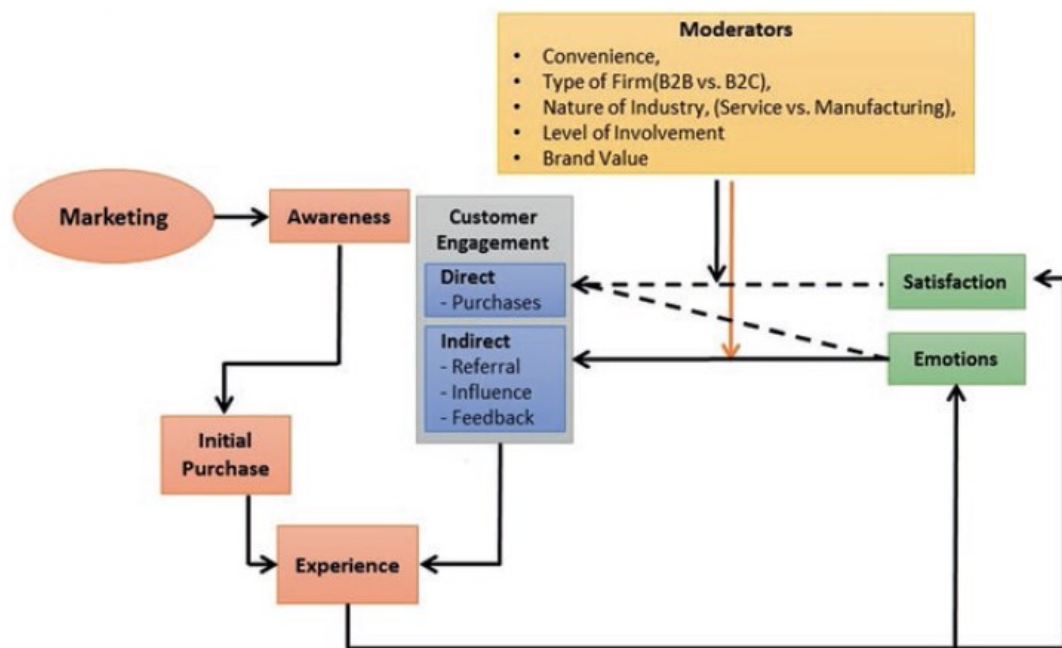


Fig. 3 Conceptual framework of customer engagement (Palmatier et al. 2018)

1.7 Shifting from B2C to B2B marketing

The task of CKM in shifting the marketing tactics from B2C to B2B has been elucidated by researchers (Gummeson, 2014). *Brand extension*-based product development may imply the relationship between the markets B2B and B2C. Brand

extension is a strategy in which a company markets a service/product with a well-known image (Knoerzer K, Millemann JA, 2021). Bose et al. (2016) evaluated consumer behaviors on branding and distinguished the difference in decision-making process between the various environments, purchasing procedures, and CE. The authors suggested that B2B brands may not lead to the favorable brand associations in B2C. Burnaz and Bilgin (2018) studied whether B2B brands can flourish in B2C marketplace. They found that the acceptance of product, the brand quality, and listening to customer around B2B brand are key elements for an interesting brand extension. Brand awareness is an important factor of the B2B marketing, albeit empirical evidence around B2C crossover is rare. As the B2C marketing is growing on the Internet, clients started to estimate product value, share knowledge, and create brand relationships and communities around both B2B and B2C products (Knoerzer K, Millemann JA, 2021). Brexendor et al. (2015) suggested that partners in the community of brand are willing around considering the brand's novel product.

1.8 Customer voice: a key tool in B2B marketing

Customer voice describes the customer's feedback around their experience with and expectation for a service or product (Nemeschansky et al. 2021). Accepting the customer voice is important for organizational successes inside the B2B

businesses. In fact, relationships in B2B marketing are complicated and the customer voice helps to better understand the B2B environments (Nemeschansky et al. 2021). In the 21st century, B2B leaders' acknowledgment of the customer voice has been originated from pre-Internet approaches into the Internet communication with the customers (Green et al., 2015). However, some organizational executives assumed that customer voice is not a critical element in marketing tactics for the industrial B2B (Green et al., 2015). These executives utilize internal quality restrictions associated with the wants and needs of customers to improve the profitability, effectiveness, and efficiency (Kotler et al. 2017). It was suggested that incorporating customer voice into marketing tactics is imperative for relationships in B2B. Nicoletti (2013) indicated the application of Lean Six Sigma as a marketing tactic can add a flexible factor to CKM and enhance client pleasure. Albeit using Lean Six Sigma can enhance operational superiority, adopting Lean Six Sigma only into usual operations can lead to remarkable failures (Madhani, 2021).

1.9 Lean Six Sigma process: a key tool in B2B marketing

Lean Six Sigma is a procedure that relies on a team effort for improving performance via systematically decreasing diversity and discarding waste. Managers use this process to enhance client satisfaction, which became evident

with adopting Lean Six Sigma by companies in the 1980s (Muralidharan and Raval, 2020). Webster disclosed that behavioral science, economics, environment science, and quantitative procedures can contribute Lean Six Sigma into the marketing paradigm. Thus, adaptation of Lean Six Sigma made better consumer value and assisted a shift from the B2C marketing into B2B marketing (Madhani, 2021).

Webster suggested how managers start to adopt customer voice and Lean Six Sigma as management tactics. Lean Six Sigma may be considered as a basic type of CKM (Albliwi et al. 2015). Lean Six Sigma includes as a marketing tactic in business adds a factor to CKM and satisfies customers (Tickle et al., 2016). Found and Harrison (2016) demonstrated that adding Lean Six Sigma to customer voice can change the expectations in global markets, directing innovative to marketing platforms. Applying customer voice, total quality management (TQM), and Lean Six Sigma are known as the best practices for upgrading the supply chain in various businesses. The using of Lean Six Sigma can translate into the capacity of CKM initiatives in B2B marketplaces (Muralidharan and Raval, 2020).

1.10 CKM technology in supply chains

Acknowledge management is a key part of supply chains, systems of resources, information, activities, people, and organizations involved in supplying a service/product to consumers (Kassaneh et al. 2021). In this regard, Piercy and Ellinger, (2014) indicated that a successful supply chain needs to adopt relationship

marketing approaches. Song et al. (2017) also disclosed that marketing leaders must attempt to hold long-term relationship on various aspects of supply chains. Consumers might be inconclusive with abundant supply options; however CKM provides a chance to keep going client fidelity (Steel et al., 2017). Sanzo and Vazquez (2015) evaluated CKM in supply chain by interviewing B2B leaders around the relationship tactics adopted for their suppliers and clients. The authors exhibited that customer fidelity is feasible by using CKM. Supply chain supplemented by CKM builds trust for customer fidelity, improves client satisfaction, and encourages organizational learning (Hardwick et al. 2013). Moreover, understanding of supplier-consumer associations contributes to initiatives, which are vital for durability in the B2B marketplaces (Kassaneh et al. 2021). However, Garrido-Moreno et al. (2015) uncovered a managerial uncertainty around CKM performance in supply chain, despite of a remarkable relationship between profitability and CKM.

To develop available CKM protocols, it is critical the prediction of future trends for consumers by using KM and CRM experiences. Knowledge sharing between end-users, customers, and trading partners can fulfill this goal (Ahari, 2021). Sharing CKM experiences with partners may result in a closer customer relationship (Fidel et al. 2015). Collaboration between supply partners decreases risk, increases trust, and causes longevity inside supply chain relationships (Asare

et al. 2016). CKM was also explored from a global perspective by Andersson and Servais (2015), who presented five product-associated aspects: frequency, innovativeness, familiarity, complexity, and importance. These five aspects provide fundamentals for designing a simple portfolio method to purchase inside the B2B marketplaces. The results of Johnson (2013) fit with this international procedure so that they exhibited that as buyer supports supplier need, any partnership leads to a value.

To address the wants of clients, B2B executives must understand their behavior. Asare et al. (2016) uncovered that social and economic aspects may affect consumer preference. It is worth noting, misreading of the cultural practices required for successful operations in the B2B marketplaces may lead to a local result, not international. Overall, a breakdown in marketing communication may become a serious problem around CE. B2B leaders may utilize a multi-channel procedure for accommodating consumer needs and for putting cultural differences under a magnifying glass. Asare et al. (2016) presented the perspective of multicultural approaches to the international marketers in the B2B area, while Andersson and Servais (2015) focused on global marketing approaches inside supply chains and suggested a favorable model for reflecting the seller and buyer insights. As a buyer supports supplier need, the value exchange forms a contribution, which improves international partnerships in supply chain and maintains consumers (Johnson,

2013). Therefore, the marketing tactics in the B2B marketplaces must address the wants of the seller/buyer, and any cultural difference that can prevent the efficiency of marketing in the B2B marketplaces.

1.11 CKM Tools

The accessibility of novel information collecting tools (e.g., *network marketing*) made a distinction in the dynamic scope of B2B markets (Lakshman et al. 2021). Ballantyne and Williams (2018) explored how relationship management could change the landscape of marketers towards a global community and start an influx of B2B leaders to utilize CRM tools. The authors indicated that the accessibility of CRM instruments did not discourage the using of the communication approaches to industrial marketing from the 1980s. The KM leadership principles offer novel procedures in the global marketplaces (Yang et al. 2014), from which CKM realized (Soltani and Navimipour, 2016). These procedures resulted in network marketing when leaders endeavor to manage the network, as an alternative for establishing global partnership (Steel et al. 2017).

The absence of CKM may result in poor decision-making and to take customers distance from B2B executives. The findings from Bone et al. (2014) revealed that

B2B relationship may create value and help marketing endeavors as an organizational concept. They unlocked a way for studying web-based peer-to-peer B2B relationships around customer service and problem solving. CKM could provide growth possibilities when marketing executives changed their focus towards the customer relationship. Ahearne et al. (2012) evaluated B2B marketing model and CKM tools. Their findings could aid to introduce CKM tools, which include the market environment, customer relationship, and sellers for a holistic approach. Ballantyne and Williams (2018) stated that seller/buyer relationships and networks are weakened when managers neglect to utilize a holistic approach in B2B marketplace. When seller/buyer networks became visible, not all focused on CKM. Lack of attention to CKM was likely because of low CKM reports accessible in the past for detailed examination of different managerial dimensions (Lakshman et al. 2021). To reinforce CKM initiatives, Gibbert et al. (2002) combined the concept of knowledge management in organizational community. They suggested that companies must gather the information obtained from consumers. This recommendation gave credit to CKM knowledge exchange over the next decade.

Business marketing intelligence (BMI) was developed by insightful executives using Intranet and data mining methods for extracting and sharing information (Weng, 2021). The idea of business marketing intelligence was transformed by managers into a CKM background. Alvi et al. (2015) determined novel BMI

methods and CKM trends in B2B marketplaces. The authors showed that how the Internet was a communication channel for adopting better decision-makings. Using this channel affected purchase processes including attitudes towards the brand, cognitive issues, rationality, and economic. Donthu et al. (2020) mapped the development of Marketing Intelligence and Planning (MIP) over the 37-year period of 1983–2019. They showed the importance MIP of in B2B marketplaces.

The shift to the client understanding and CKM adopting by marketing executives could made an organizational competitive advantage and strengthen the relationship with consumers (Eid and El-Gohary, 2014). As suggested, the knowledge about, to, and from customers became a helpful instrument for predicting the buy patterns. The beginning of knowledge management successfully integrated organizational competency and shifted the focus from service/product to consumer consciousness (Yang et al., 2014). Information obtained from, to, and about past transaction and client preference can give important insights into future purchase and changing trend (Archer-Brown and Kietzmann, 2020). This knowledge originated from social media around market trends can encourage user conversation and maintain clients. Moreover, client understanding is a key section of the B2B relationship (Johnson, 2013). Many B2B executives of supply chain use the CKM tools and struggle to affect their partner for adopting a new technology (Asare et al., 2016).

Knowledge sharing is helpful to adopt efficient marketing tactics (Setini et al. 2021). However, the sharing of CKM information is limited by some factors. Wilkinson and Young (2013) acknowledged that environmental complexities may influence leaderships in an organization. Marketing experts may be reluctant to take advantage of accessible simulation models of information technology because strategic incompetence and marketing failure may become surprising in dynamic markets. In a competitive environment, CKM tools may not be as efficient as we expected. In such environments, combining data from multiple resources can help management teams around using CKM for competitive advantages (Braganza et al, 2018). Baker and Carson (2015) indicated that an organization may adapt to new technologies inside competitive markets to stay away from the consequences of uncertainty in their customers. The unsuccessful use of new technologies may result in manager doubtful for utilizing CKM tools to get competitive advantages. Gibbert and Probst (2002) found that no sharing personnel insights from both a technological and contemplative aspect can stop the fusion of customer knowledge into CKM platforms. Braganza et al. (2018) outlined that during stable conditions, marketing executives develop CKM tools for capturing client information. The authors believed that adapting an efficient CKM system for reflecting customer preference may help to maintain customers. Unlike this conclusion, Ahearne et al. (2012) stated that sharing customer information may not succeed under exceptional situations. Overall, looking at stakeholders and consumers can offer useful

awareness into client preference and upgrade CKM tools in the B2B marketing (Ok et al. 2018). As the future trend of Internet, Intelligence can result in improving the efficiency of marketing in B2B. Thus, the linked data theory, which is a possible path towards realizing the Web 3.0 is suggested to make the data interlinked. Using the concepts of Web 3.0 and the linked data technology in CKM has an ability to solve the challenges of knowledge sharing for achieving the interested knowledge as soon as possible (Lai et al. 2020).

Of course, some controversies became appeared along with using CKM tools and new technologies. For instance, managers must adjust the marketing tactics based on the knowledge obtained from the unpredictable consumers (Taghizadeh et al. 2018). However, Braganza et al. (2018) studied knowledge sharing and long-term B2B relationship and disclosed that the advantages of CKM can disable negative impacts over time. He et al. (2019) considered CKM as a useful tool to revitalize relationship by using viral networking and social media in global realms. The authors acknowledged the importance of paying attention to the competitive environments, documenting the data exchanges, and following an efficient management approach.

1.12 Data mining in CKM

Data mining (DM), the process of finding correlations, patterns, and anomalies within large data sets for predicting outcomes, offers a variety of potential tools for

collecting information in digital marketing (Saura, 2021). Stein et al. (2016) outlined that DM is applicable to a range of settings, therefore is considered as an adjustable CKM tool. DM-based exploring the published data on the Internet around CKM facilitated the analysis of competitor offering, customer behavior, and organizational response. Ahearne et al. (2012) evaluated the connections among the length of customer relationship, supplier ability, and client satisfaction. They supposed that CKM initiatives, such as DM, enable organizations by a range of communicational channels to distinguish client wants and to better serve their B2B clients. When fully applied, CKM builds trust within seller/buyer relationship and become a profitable tool in decision-making (Hardwick et al., 2013).

An important challenge is not inside the approach in use, but how B2B executives utilized the data (Wright et al. 2019). The *Internet* has been became a key platform for gathering information in B2B marketplaces, and thereby build trust inside the marketing channels. On the Internet, DM technology provides an opportunity to discover the hidden knowledge, look for patterns, and categorize information (Stein et al., 2016). DM reveals several important sections in CKM, including customer lifetime value, predicting future purchase, brand preference, and fidelity (Wang et al., 2017). It is worth noting, learning capabilities play an important role in efficiently using the different properties of CKM obtained by data mining in order to improve CE (Wright et al. 2019).

Value-based marketing along with CKM in supply chain guarantees sustainability within the B2B marketplaces. In other words, organizational longevity depends on understanding B2B clients and their business, as well as demand of the end-users (Liu and Zhao, 2021). Focus on sharing BMI strategies and inter-organizational information can add client value (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2015). In fact, BMI logistics, networking, and CKM tools are methods for exploring components of an ever-changing B2B marketplace.

1.13 Social networking channels

Social networks reshape the way by which organizational managers communicate with their customers (Pascucci et al. 2018). Purchasing patterns within social networks can make better decision-making for B2B marketers and buyers. Social networking channels are helpful for fostering B2B relationship and determining future patterns (Pascucci et al. 2018). Therefore, the mobile applications such as Vine, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Facebook may offer valuable interface for CKM and provide potential options for engaging customers.

Communication platforms and social media encourage customer feedbacks, i.e., *word-of-mouth marketing*, which is a powerful factor in purchasing behaviors

(Khuong et al. 2021). This encouraging, in turn, can inspire brand loyalty and engage the customers. In this regard, Meuter et al. (2015) acknowledged that personnel familiarity of customers lead to a high acceptance of services/products presented in the target marketplace. They also elucidated that when online customers mention a service or product, word-of-mouth marketing, a range of potential customers are attracted by person-to-person connection. In spite of the importance of word-of-mouth marketing, some managers yet not incorporate information originated from this marketing into CKM data (Eisingerich et al., 2014).

Sustainable relationships can be achieved by social networking applications and CKM tools (Bruhn and Schnebelen, 2017). Trainor et al. (2014) evaluated the relationships between customer centric tactics and social media and revealed the high value of both inside CRM and CKM. In fact, cyberspace applications integrated with customer engagement tactics lead to long-lasting engagement and sustainable relationship in B2B organizations (Bruhn and Schnebelen, 2017).

Marketing leaders must cautiously utilize client information and bring *ethical issues* into their tactics (Murphy and Bloom, 2017). Baker and Carson (2015) explained that members of an organization that is adopting CKM tactics for mining customer Facebook-originated data may unconsciously or consciously withdraw from immoral violations in the area of client privacies. Lin et al. (2012) conversely

indicated that CKM tools can minimize risks ahead and misconceptions around client demand and preference.

1.14 Risks and profits on CKM

A difficulty facing leaders is that marketing is a main cost with few efficient procedures for tracking revenues. The excellent route to keep marketing momentum is to exhibit outcomes (Lal et al. 2020). Kumar et al., (2017) indicated that the absence of tools for estimating marketing return on investment (ROI) under/overvalues the effect of CE tactics and lead to loss of credibility. The authors presented evidence regarding that about 75% of managers faced a type of mistrust in the marketing capability to gain a profitable campaign. They also discovered approximately 40% of marketing leaders are unable to utilize the CKM information appropriately, whereas another 30% harbored little or no data to estimate.

The application of return on investment (ROI), may not be a marker of successful marketing schedules. Kumar et al. (2017) expressed that the data sharing can make successful attempts for high return on investment. The opposite was reported by Katsikeas et al. (2016), who stated that ROI may be a key tool for improving future marketing but it cannot be considered as a marker of coming profits. Sharing data

derived from CKM can be helpful to estimate customer value as another form of ROI (Haider and Kayani, 2021).

The neurophysiological data also has been incorporated to estimate ROI (Schreiner and Riedl, 2019). Clients possess several options to uncover data around services/products such as competitor websites, end-user insights, and product reviews (Larivière et al., 2013). The authors revealed that managers who use the social psychology-derived data can give their consumers an attractive opportunity for engagement. This information can help B2B executives to achieve favorable brand equity through formulating better ROI matrices.

The association between *relationship specific investments* and organizational life-cycle has been explored for determining operational efficiency in entrepreneurial undertaking (Brettel et al. 2012). The relationship marketing attempts with main clients provides useful return in early lifecycle steps of entrepreneurial enterprises (Khan and Eilert, 2021). Relationship specific investments reflect formalized and stabilized protocols, indicating commitment and trusteeship to customers (Khan and Eilert, 2021). Adjusting the relationship specific investments based on client change can reduce costs, strengthen CE, and improve the outlook for data platforms related to CKM (Sun and Zhong, 2020).

Of course, the implementation of CKM as a marketing strategic approach can be hindered by the understanding of CKM facts. Ahearne et al., (2012) proved that the success rate of CKM as a tool is lower than they anticipated. Executives' trust in the procedures for data collection/quality from customers may lead to an unfavorable picture for the stakeholder (Joshi et al., 2014). Executives' uncertainty around leadership tactics, decision-making, and communication contributes to the avoidance of CKM. Therefore, marketing leaders may avoid unknown risks and stay instead within their safe area by not using CKM (Oliva and Kotabe, 2019).

1.15 Organizational Psychology around CKM

Organizational psychology is a key concept regarding the use of CKM by B2B executives. Dynamic capability and technological opportunism were appeared as the most studied themes from the previous studies about organizational psychology because neglecting these psychological themes may be a reason for CKM failure in B2B marketing. Several psychological causes exist why managers use CKM technologies and why these are either inappropriately utilized or not in utilization (Hohenthal et al., 2014). Critical elements causing CKM failure may be originated from difference in *interaction orientation*, a company's capability to interact with its individual customers (Efrat and Øyna, 2021). Moreover, experience with the psychological information technology along with clients' motivations, intentions,

and attitudes may result in technophobia, where technology-related complexity may become a limiting factor to organizational management (Hohenthal et al., 2014). Despite all these challenges, it should be remembered that organizational objective, management, structure, culture, and psychology together build the background for engage the customers of a company (Aboelmaged, 2014).

Technological opportunism: The "sense-and-respond capability to novel technologies" may be a unique characteristic of entrepreneurial personality and CKM acceptance in the industrial marketplaces. Chen and Lien (2016) disclosed that some marketing tactics may utilize technological opportunism for overcoming worries around the expected outcome from the application of the modern tools. The concept of "sense-and-respond capability to novel technologies" is not enough to retain and engage customer. Based on Lucia-Palacios et al. (2014), managers can predict and make a response to new technologies and tools by considering the technological opportunism as an organizational advantage. The utilization of modern tools in CKM may result in customer retention and improve CE in the B2B marketplaces.

The acceptance of the latest developments and technologies may provide a key innovative element for managers' compatibility to listen the customer voice (Lucia-Palacios et al., 2014). The capability to forecast new technologies and consumers' ever-changing wants may create a competitive advantage in the target organization

(Lin et al., 2012). Marketing executives must give thought to economic and demographic trends for being victory in a competitive environment and must discard off-the-shelf schedules (Sarkees, 2018). The risk of shift to accessible technologies is that marketing executives may understand heterogeneous findings.

For avoiding the effect of any uncertainty, managers may adapt to novel technologies inside a competitive market. In such market, managerial learning abilities and technological skills for using CKM tools may be a hidden challenge (Oliva and Kotabe, 2019). The non-successful application of modern technologies may result in managerial doubts of using CKM as a remedy and hope to the customer retention and engagement (Baker and Carson, 2015).

In addition to technological factors, non-technological elements may also influence the acceptance of CKM technology. The worries derived from managerial tactics, competitor offering, or customer retention may disrupt the efficiency of CKM in an organization (Chen and Lien, 2016). These worries, in turn, may prevent the synthesis of novel knowledge and cause the erosion of intellectual capitals. Ahearne et al. (2012) proposed the development a bottom-up attitude while adopting a top-down of new tools in CKM.

Dynamic capabilities: Dynamic capabilities in organizational theory are defined as the organizational abilities for adapting an organization's resource base

purposefully. Each organization acts by exploiting available sources in a dynamic environment. Resources of dynamic capabilities include adaptation, expansion, and integration, of hidden abilities with routines in an organization (Wilden and Gudergan, 2017). Lin and Higgins (2016) indicated that the dynamic capabilities of CRM and KM are important tools in creating novel sources for adding value to each offering and engaging the customers. The authors also found that the integration of organizational sources, capabilities, and knowledge add the further value to CE. To generate organizational competence, the employees' capability must be fostered by exploiting of sources in order to offer innovative scopes and learn novel knowledge.

Managerial abilities may include clear routines, which integrate deep decision-making and new technology. Davies and Brady (2016) could integrate managerial experience and predisposition with sensing capabilities to incorporate the psychological concept of intuition into the paradigm of dynamic capabilities. Therefore, marketing leaders' awareness and strategic tactics for incorporating technology to CKM may create a competitive advantage (Eid and El-Gohary, 2014).

1.16 Research Question

The main study question that directs this research is: What CKM tactics do B2B executives for improving CE?

The study will focus on the challenges found in the context of low knowledge of marketing managers for utilizing CKM technology to make better CE in the B2B marketing. the literature review is imperative to formulate the research question

Questions are presented in the Appx. A:

Interview questions as follow:

1. How would you describe CKM?
2. How you utilize CKM to connect with clients?
3. What tactics do you utilize to handle CKM?
4. What is your experience around the usage of CKM tactics?
5. What tactics do you think have a positive impact on your company's method to CKM?
6. How would you describe CE?
7. What do you speculate is required by B2B leaders to engage clients?

8. What do you think are obstacles to CE?
9. How does your decision apply to CE?
10. What tactics do you think would make better your company's method to CE?
11. How do you think CKM tactics have an impact on your company's method to CE?
12. How would you define your supply chain in your company?
13. What tactics do you utilize to handle the supply chain in your company?
14. How do you utilize CKM technology to contact with clients in supply chains in your company?
15. What tactics do you think have a further positive impact on your company's method to CKM around supply chains?
16. Finally, what else want to tell that may relate to your experience concerning CE as well as CKM?

In the light of the overview discussed in Chapter I, a clear challenge on "marketing managers' knowledge of how to utilize CKM technology to make better CE in the B2B marketing" has emerged, despite its potential advantages. Therefore,

it is imperative to explore the B2B managers' knowledge around using CKM to improve CE. Given this problem, the recent study was aimed at this topic.

Chapter II

AN OVERVIEW ON CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide an overview of the conceptual frameworks around the *research question*, with holding the focus of the analysis on using CKM in B2B marketing towards CE. In the sections of the first Chapter, II will provide a detail on the statement of problem, the statement of purpose, the nature of study, the question of study, the questions of interview, conceptual frameworks (dynamic capability and technological opportunism), assumptions, operational definition of terms, delimitations, limitations, the importance of study, contributions to business practices, and implication for social changes. The Third Chapter will be allocated to data analysis, results, conclusion, and suggestions.

2.1 The Statement of Problem

B2B strategists have acknowledged B\$ in loss due to a 70% failure rate in knowledge management (Chaithanapat and Rakthin, 2020). CKM offers an opportunity to achieve sustainable, profitable, and bilateral supplier/client relationships (Archer-Brown and Kietzmann 2018). Despite the fact that around 75% of B2B executives are aware of CKM tactics, most of them do not consider

using the tactics when designing B2B plans (Ahearnea et al., 2012). Therefore, the *general problem* of business is marketing decision makers generally do not utilize CKM tactics in marketing plan, product design, cyberspace and social network, and or novel innovations in order to engage their customers (Garrido-Moreno et al. 2015).

In spite of the interesting advantages, the potential complexities of CKM together with insufficient data may contribute to execution failure (Braganza et al. 2018). In other words, the customer voice covers well-informed buyers who require a total purchase option, which is a movement from the single purchases towards the acceptance of offerings such as pre-/post-purchase service. This kind of shift to a package of goods or services can result in CKM failure due to wrong data and disinformation (Nemeschansky et al. 2021). Therefore, the *specific problem* of business is that some B2B leaders have a low insight into how to apply CKM tactics for engaging their customers in B2B.

2.2 The Statement of Purpose

This study is focused on exploring the problem that some B2B leaders have a restricted insight into how to utilize CKM tactics for improving CE. The population includes B2B managers who were members of the International Advertising

Association (IAA) group in LinkedIn social network. To collect data, face-to-face, in-depth interviews are performed with different levels of B2B executives on various days. It is important to note that the population consisting of B2B executives was suitable for this single-case research since they offer a chance to take a look at the CKM difficulty from a managerial landscape. Insights from this information can enhance CE in order to increase ROI.

2.3 The Nature of Study

I utilize a *single-case, exploratory, qualitative study* to evaluate CKM strategic tactics for CE. Using *single-case design* leads to uncover insights and explore the problem under studying for a deep understanding. This type of study also is a helpful tool for capturing the daily occurrence of an event and is the favorable tool for discovering the why or the how of an event (Yin, 2017). Three kinds of case studies are: explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory. In this study, the *exploratory design* is a suitable fit since it can uncover tactical and strategic activities of CKM within a B2B company. The study design needs using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies simultaneously that leads to a strong exploration of the problem than the application of each design alone. However, this design may add ambiguity to an interpretative concern and cannot reflect the objective of study (Yin, 2017). The purpose of our effort is to uncover the association between

acceptation of CKM tactics and B2B leaders' perception. Therefore, a *qualitative design* is suitable to investigate the experience, feeling, and thought of B2B managers.

2.4 The Question of Study

The main study question that directs this research is: What CKM tactics do B2B executives for improving CE?

2.5 The Questions of Interview

This study respects the respondents and their individual knowledge, opinion, perception, and experience of the phenomenon. Researcher treats management-level participants with respect. The questions of interview examine the specific B2B problem that some B2B executives harboring restricted knowledge of how to utilize CKM tactics for improving CE. Questions are presented in the Appx. A:

2.6 Conceptual Framework

It is very imperative to understand factors effecting on adapting CKM tactics to engage customers in B2B. The dynamic capability and technological opportunism are found to be the most studied topics in the experiential researches at the field of B2B (Chapter I). These theories suggest that CE failure may be a consequence of parallel concerns from the concepts of CKM. The concepts of dynamic capability, technological opportunism, and technology transformation established the conceptual framework of the recent study.

2.6.1 Technological Opportunism

Technological opportunism is defined as organizational competency to understand, foretaste, respond, or adapt to technological transformations (Feiz et al. 2017). This sense-and-respond capability of a company respecting to a novel technology provides a conceptual framework for supporting this research. Literature indicates that some companies are unable in using methodical approaches for applying CKM tactics, leading to their incapability to adapt to those changes occurred in marketplace (Ferrell and Ferrell, 2020). In contrast, some other companies may adapt to easily accessible technologies inside the dynamic markets for avoiding the impacts of any uncertainty, suggesting a possible failure along the way (Ferrell and Ferrell, 2020). This concept fit the current research since it assists

me to figure out the logical argument behind selecting an easily accessible schedule rather than customizing a CKM tool for improving CE.

2.6.2 Dynamic Capability

The framework of dynamic capability describes that during strong market activities, companies are succeeded as a consequence of using a range of available sources (Lakshman et al. 2021). The high point of study by previous reports (Davies and Brady, 2016) revealed the hypothesis of the source-based view of dynamic capability. In these researches, organizational tendency and behavior for competitive advantages along with the dynamic capability hypothesis were explored inside technological environments via reconfiguring, integrating, and adapting various sources and skills. Porter's five forces, source-based view theory, and CKM became the hypothesis of dynamic capabilities (Davies and Brady, 2016). The concept of dynamic capability can favorably fit this research to assist uncover how B2B executives adapt to CKM tactics for encouraging CE.

2.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Business marketing: It is marketing practice of services, raw materials, and goods to B2B clientele (Kotler et al. 2021).

Business-to-consumer (B2C): It refers to selling services or products directly to clients, bypassing any third-party wholesalers, retailers, or any middleman (Kotler et al. 2021).

Business-to-business (B2B): It refers a situation where one business makes a commercial transaction with another to: (a) government agencies, (b) institutions, or (c) other businesses for manufacture or resale (Kotler et al. 2021).

Brand stretching: It is a marketing tactic in which a company utilizes the same brand name for a product with a well-known image to attract a large market share (Kotler et al. 2021).

Customer engagement (CE): It is the process of interacting with customers by a range of channels for strengthening the relationship between a brand and a client (Kotler et al. 2021).

Customer knowledge management (CKM): It refers to the processes and tools that companies use for capturing, storing, organizing, accessing, and analyzing data around their customers, for the objectives of improving their engagement, retention, and sale efforts (Kotler et al. 2021).

Customer relationship management (CRM): It refers to the process in which businesses administer their interaction with clientele, usually using data analysis to explore large amount of information (Kotler et al. 2021).

Customer voice: In marketing, the customer voice summarizes client' aversions, preferences, and expectations (Kotler et al. 2021).

Data mining: It is a process of uncovering patterns in a large data set involving methodologies at the intersection of database statistics, and machine learning systems (Kotler et al. 2021).

Lean-Six-Sigma: It is a methodology that relies on a collaborative team endeavor for improving performance via systematically reducing variation and removing waste (Kotler et al. 2021).

2.8 Assumptions

Assumptions are any accepted ideas that researchers believe to be true (Yin, 2017). My assumptions are as follows: i) All B2B executives would answer honestly; ii) The participants in the target population look on my research as reliable, relevant, and admissible; iii) The reasons for failure in CKM tactics may not be obvious, including the restricted understanding of the tool itself, the lack of enthusiasm to share unspoken knowledge, the absence of organizational commitments, and/or the incapability to synchronize process functions.

2.9 Limitations

Limitations are indicators which by researchers understand the study process and act as a remark to the borders of the study (Yin, 2017). The single-case research includes one organization involved in B2B. Limitations of the research are as follows: I) The intellectual focus on a single organization may be not reflected the public perception of CKM tactics in B2B; ii) The small number of contributors may be not generalized to other populations; iii) The time limit of the research.

2.10 Delimitations

The delimitations or boundaries are applied by a specific problem in single-case studies (Yin, 2017). Delimitations of this study are as follows: I) I limit contributors to those employees at the B2B executive position, including a vice president, a senior manager, and/or a manager; II) The research attempt consists of in-depth interviews with B2B executives.

2.11 The importance of Study

The researchers reported 70% as the failure rate of CE in a wide range of B2B companies a common problem for businesses is that b2b marketing decision makers usually don't use CKM strategies in marketing planning, product design, cyberspace, and social networks, or make novel innovations to attract customers.

In other words, Voice of the Customer encompasses well-informed buyers who demand comprehensive purchasing options, a shift from single purchases to products such as pre-/post-purchase services. Such transfers to packages of goods or services may fail the CKM due to incorrect data and false information. Despite interesting advantages, CKM's potential complexity and insufficient data can lead to execution failures. Because of that, suggesting a need for exploring the helpful tactics such as CKM.

Collaborative approaches originated from CKM strategic tactics can lead to consumer trust and eventually increase customer lifetime value, i.e., the total worth to a B2B business of a customer over the period of their relationship. As well as, Knowing the information of CKM

can develop tactical and strategic steps and reveal risks in order to minimize business waste and promote economic growth.

Therefore, On the basis of these literature discussed in Chapter I, the objective of my research is to establish an in-depth exploration of the challenge that some executives have low awareness of how to utilize CKM approaches to make better CE in the B2B marketing.

It is important to note that, I pick out a qualitative mythology for the current research. The population consisting of B2B executives was suitable for this single-case research since they offer a chance to look at the CKM difficulty from a managerial landscape. Insights from this information can enhance CE to increase ROI. At the same time, despite its limitations, the current research will be made multiple important contributions to future studies on using CKM to improve CE in B2B.

Finally, from a management perspective, the study reveals what B2B leaders need to know inside the ever-changing of marketing strategies. The current research has a potential to contribute to the existent literature for adopting CKM towards improving CE and prosperity of successful B2B companies.

2.12 Implications

2.12.1 Implication for Business Practices

Understanding of CKM information may develop tactical and strategic steps and reveal risks in order to minimize business wastes as well as promote economic growth. The study uncovers what B2B leaders require to know inside the ever-changing tactics of marketing.

2.12.2 Implication for Social Changes

The implications of this study are as follows: I) The marketing communities may analyze data to obtain more insights into the triple bottom line: profit, planet, and people; II) Information related to consumer belief and behavior can result in product initiatives, which in turn improve humane working conditions promote an ecological balance; III) Information can offer insights into CKM innovations and B2B marketing; IV) Educating and engaging consumer by green marketing (Brindley and Oxborrow, 2014) innovation may gain remarkable benefits for B2B companies.

2.12.3 Implication for Managerial Practices

From a managerial point of view, the study uncovers what B2B leaders require to know inside the ever-changing tactics of marketing. In fact, the B2B managers can detect various barriers in consumer-company relationships and overcome them by using a wide range of CKM tactics.

Chapter III

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF EMERGING THEMES

In this Chapter, the data will be analyzed for answering the study question presented at the end of Chapter I. On the basis of these literature discussed in Chapter I, the objective of my research is to establish an in-depth exploration of the challenge that some executives have low awareness of how to utilize CKM approaches to make better CE in the B2B marketing.

To address my research question, the analysis will be carried out following a special methodology including sequential steps as follows:

- Research methodology
- Analysis
- Validity and Reliability
- Applications to Professional Practice and Social Changes
- Conclusion

3.1 Research Methodology

3.1.1 Study design

I followed exploratory qualitative single-case research with a purposeful sampling, a non-probability method, of contributors.

I look at quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods and finally selected the *qualitative design*. It has been uncovered that client behavior can translate into a B2B pattern via analyzing the ultimate purchase choice (Jackson and Wood 2015). However, the supporters of quantitative research believe that qualitative methodologies are weak for translating client experience into comprehensible comparisons (Tsang, 2014). Since the purpose of our work was to investigate the lived participant experiences, which is be hard to quantify into statistical generalization by the test of hypothesis, setting indicators, and data mining (Tsang, 2014), I pick out a qualitative mythology for the current research.

I look at case study, phenomenological, and grounded theory and finally selected the *case study design*. The most used qualitative designs for marketing explorations are case study, phenomenological (the existential or understanding experience and the hermeneutic or decoding meaning), and grounded theory (Valtakoski, 2020). Grounded theory aims at discovering theory in the data, which was not the initial objective of the recent project. Phenomenology also focuses on studding the

experiences from the overview of those individuals living the intended phenomenon, which was not the initial objective of the recent project. Neither existential nor hermeneutic phenomenology was appropriate to the current study (Valtakoski, 2020). In contrast, it has been suggested that case study designs facilitate intellectual evaluation of the perception and feeling the respondents. Moreover, for a look into real-life environments, the flexibility in B2B case study designs become guidance for marketing research (Tsang, 2014).

Exploratory design, as research used to assay a problem which is not clearly defined, was found the best choice for this project because for the first time I evaluated the experience and perception of B2B leaders around the CKM tactics used to enhance CE.

3.1.2. Purposeful Sampling and Participants

I utilized a *purposeful sampling* and *methodological triangulation*. Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure, and it happens when “factors are selected chosen by the judgment of the researcher. I used purposeful sampling because it can justify the small sample size in the recent project (Yin, 2017). Theoretical data saturation means that researcher reach a point in data analysis that sampling more data cannot cause more information associated with its study

questions (O'Reilly and Parker, 2012). In a case study design, the average sample population comprises one to five respondents (Yin, 2017). I utilized purposeful sampling of five participants for saturation in the case study, as suggested by Möller and Parvinen, (2015). Methodological triangulation means a researcher uses several methodologies to have multiple perspectives on an issue being studied (Dzwigol, 2020). To uncover a real-life scope of CKM in marketing B2B, I used interviews (Appx. B) and participant validation and observation as methodological triangulation.

In the research, a managerial team was included as *target population*. The members of managerial team were in charge of marketing strategic tactics of a B2B simulation and training organization. These individuals were as the members of the International Advertising Association (IAA) Group in LinkedIn. To find the intended contributors, I requested to the administrators of this group to get permission for inviting managers by the board of discussion (Appx. C). The following were included in the request: a description of the research objective and the ethical considerations. I utilized the discussion board for inviting marketing leaders after receiving administrator agreement. My post harbored a notice describing the study criteria and ensured that the managers' identity remain unrecognizable (Appx. D). After emailing an invitation, the response from the company leader was received along with declare her consent. A cooperation letter

was signed by this executive (Appx. E). I performed the interview carefully for reducing complications and enhancing participation.

The *competency criteria* for respondents to participate in this project consisted of (Appx. F):

- Respondents' organizations possessed CKM instruments available on their website.
- Respondents' organizations possessed CKM technologies accessible for the supply chain personnel, product development, sale, and marketing.
- Respondents were charge for designing the marketing tactics in their organizations.
- Respondents were familiar with the marketing tactics in the CKM context.
- Respondents were at the managerial level in their organizations.

3.1.3 Instrument and Tool

As described by Yin (2017), I as the researcher, was the early *instrument* for collecting data in the project. The researcher has a duty to act as an unbiased data gatherer, without any bias to a specific answer. In fact, researchers neutrally must

design study, collect, and analyze data, and finally present information (Yin, 2017). Holding the interviews unbiased involves listening and interest in what the participants had to state. Thus, a researcher must stay away from subjecting contributors to inappropriate harms, whether psychological or physical, and adhere to the principals of justice, respect, and beneficence (Artal and Rubinfeld, 2017). My contribution to the LinkedIn group added reliability to this recent work. The contributors had confidence in that I can sufficiently interpret their experience around CKM. This trust led to a rational interpretation of their experiences and involvements. The managers were convenient around their perception and thought during in-depth interview because of my familiarity with marketing. The interview protocol (Appx. B) assisted in reducing interviewer bias and in standardizing the interview process since the researcher is a tool in a semi-structured interview (Yin, 2017). As an adviser in the interview methods, the process of interview suggested by Rubin and Rubin (1995) helped me throughout the dialogs when needful.

As the main tool in the recent study, the questions of interview are as follows:

1. How would you describe CKM?
2. How you utilize CKM to connect with clients?
3. What tactics do you utilize to handle CKM?
4. What is your experience around the usage of CKM tactics?

5. What tactics do you think have a positive impact on your company's method to CKM?
6. How would you describe CE?
7. What do you speculate is required by B2B leaders to engage clients?
8. What do you think are obstacles to CE?
9. How does your decision apply to CE?
10. What tactics do you think would make better your company's method to CE?
11. How do you think CKM tactics have an impact on your company's method to CE?
12. How would you define your supply chain in your company?
13. What tactics do you utilize to handle the supply chain in your company?
14. How do you utilize CKM technology to contact with clients in supply chains in your company?
15. What tactics do you think have a further positive impact on your company's method to CKM around supply chains?

16. Finally, what else want to tell that may relate to your experience concerning CE as well as CKM?

3.2 Analysis

3.2.1 Data Collection

Data collecting needs get familiarity with similar case, observation, interview, and a researcher committed to making conclusion drawn from options. To elucidate a potential for researcher bias, researchers must describe her/his relationship with the subject of research (Yin, 2017). My endeavor was to include a description of marketing history, a program relevant to the audience, a managerial time plan, and an interview protocol for ensuring consistency. The different procedures for *collecting data* in my project included interviewing, digital recording, participant validation and observation. My purpose was to gather exact data and information, meaning, and description of the lived experiences of B2B leaders in responsibility of using CKM technology.

I stored the interviews on a digital recorder along with respondent observations for capturing the body language. The digital recorder was user-friendly and simply could interface with the computing platform. My endeavor was consisted of a Livescribe journal for documenting my observations, such as the body language of

the managers during the interview. Then, I completed the journal by detailing the labels (P1-P5) to each transcription. The interviews were first transcribed via OneNote Digital Note Taking and then categorizing by the patterns and themes based on the phrases and words.

The data collection technique involves a line of questions to describe templates by directing the dialogs towards the themes reflecting the topic of interest. The flexibility of interview harbored the capability for discovering complex components of organizational behaviors. To interview participants, open-ended questions and general themes could support manager's autonomy for sharing their knowledge, while reflecting their experience, opinion, and analysis. After interviewing and transcription by Microsoft Word and synthesizing of raw data, I sent an email to the respondents for transcript checking. No change was required to the transcribed documents. Data were analyzed and then interpreted, followed by a phone talking for member checking. Based on the assurance I gave to the participants; I destroyed any documents that could be used as clues to identify them.

3.2.2 Data Analysis

I carried out *systematic text condensation* to explore patterns, to convey the experience of respondents, and to articulate the thematic format. Systematic text

condensation has been presented by Giorgi's four-step principles for developing themes through psychological stimuli (Malterud 2012). I used systematic text condensation to decrease potential coding errors and to determine completeness, transparency, and accuracy in the data (Malterud 2012). I performed the following steps: a) I looked at the phenomenon from the participant's point of view. b) I explored the themes, patterns, and statements relating to the fundamental question in the transcripts. c) I sorted and organized themes noted (i.e., coding step). d) I grouped the themes via searching context, inconsistency, and comprehensive elements. e) I synthesized the results. Finally, to develop patterns and themes, information received from the respondents was integrated by systematic text condensation and the managers' words for member checking, observation, and topic interpretation.

I used standard *software package* for analyzing qualitative data, NVivo V.12 (Edhlund and McDougall, 2019), to reveal patterns and themes obtained from interview. Then, these themes and patterns were documented in a table format (Appx. H). Each respondent answered the same questions for obtaining steadiness in the project. The managers had freedom for answering the questions by using open-ended questions and my instrument (Appx. A). The main query was as follows: How do you explain your procedure for utilizing CKM to engage customers?

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Estimating the validity and reliability of tools in qualitative researches is hard when compared with those for quantitative researches (Cohen et al. 2017). However, the utilization of several data resources for methodological triangulation can establish an alternative way for measuring *trustworthiness* and *repeatability* in qualitative researches (Cohen et al. 2017). I utilized the following criteria for establishing the repeatability and trustworthiness in my project: methodological triangulation, member checking, and validity and reliability.

3.3.1 Reliability

Research reliability is the degree to which study method can produce consistent results, i.e., referring to the results' reproducibility. The reliability of the data measures the credibility and the objectivity of the study (Cohen et al. 2017). Several procedures have been suggested to assure the consistency of the results, including theme analysis, methodological triangulation, review of the transcripts, and purposeful sampling (Yin, 2017). In the single-case study, I followed methodological triangulation and member checking. I utilized a journal LiveScribe

for documenting details of each interview, reflecting feeling and thought at each stage of the research, and adherence to the protocols.

3.3.2 Validity

Research validity refers to how accurately a method can measure what it is intended to measure, i.e., trustworthiness. Yin (2017) suggested using several resources as a support of the validity of the findings in a study. To assure validity, I included in-depth interviews. Moreover, the interview of a purposeful sample of business leaders assisted in exploring their perspective and in comparing their experience. Methodological triangulation also assisted in confirming my interpretations of the results by interviewing marketing leaders, recording observations, monitoring virtual and real-time simulation and training events, and looking at the organization website for ensuring data saturation. For transferability (external validity), I implemented each interview at the same location and the same time of the day for repeating the conditions. For credibility (internal validity), I gave the managers their typed interview and I asked them for confirming their interview.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations and concerns are an important section of qualitative research (Cohen et al. 2017). I collected data after approving the research proposal,

Before the interview begins, I presented a transparent and specific attention to descriptions around the study nature, the potential impact on the respondents and their organizations, the implication for social changes, and the issues interfering with the phenomenon exploration. They signed a consent form (Appx. F). I also appointed an assumed name to each respondent (P1-P5) and an alpha nickname for its organization (i.e., O) before the interview. Involvement in this project was arbitrary and individuals were free for withdrawing at any time directly by contacting me.

I endeavored to keep going ethical standards and performed the interviews with respect to the respondents, reflecting that this study was practical. I described the measures for data security, ethical issues, and privacy of the respondents and their organization. The collaboration in this project did not give rise to any risk for the respondent safety, beyond recalling their lived experience. The contributors in this work may face making-decision challenges daily due to the status of the managerial sensitivity. The participants were comfortable throughout the interview, and no one became upset. I provided a list of local anxiety drugs, however were not required. Based on the APA guidelines, I stored all data in a secured place and after finishing analysis, I destroy all documents.

3.5 Results and Discussion

The results of this case study are relevant to the main question of the research: What CKM tactics do executives employ for improving CE in the B2B marketplaces? The rate of response for cooperating managers to this project was 100% of the five marketing leaders. The purposeful sample in the recent study included five executives from a high-technology training/simulation provider in the context of B2B. I came eye-to-eye with each leader, described the study procedure, and represented a consent form. The executives signed the consent and accepted for contributing. They answered to each question and represented true answers that were differed in consideration, depth, as well as scope.

The managers elucidated their response as required for transcribing interviews and participant validation. First all marketing leaders confirmed the transcript for ensuring validation and then approved my interpretation of their responses. Respondents' observation from interview allowed the methodological triangulation to be followed. I replaced the names of managers with P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5 codes and the name of company with C after personally transcribing interviews as well as participant validation, i.e., member checking. To discover patterns and themes, I loaded the data into NVivo V.12 in line with Edhlund and McDougall, (2019).

To use Giorgi's systematic text condensation, I followed the below stages. First, I look through the whole answer for capturing a scope of its different elements and then re-look through the materials of interview for distinguishing meaning, substances, and themes. Second, I interpreted the interview, participant observation, participant validation, and then introduced the obtained data into NVivo V.12. I performed the analysis of data through the respondents' words for patterns and themes. The managers talked about the different issues around the absence of wide-company strategies for mining data and clients' information. I followed the triangulation of the results by asking the respondents to look my synopsis and then deciphering of their transcript for fulfilling a precise approach. The findings of the recent project could address the study question and the problem of how marketing leaders may enhance CE in a B2B marketplace.

It is worth noting, non-tech effects could influence the understanding and utilization of CKM technology. In line with our observations, Sundqvist and Svard (2016) also acknowledged that managerial objectives along with organizational structure, psychology, and culture lead to the implicit basis for adopting technology and increasing CE. Uncovering the elements for users' resistance to new technologies provides an opportunity to develop operational superiority (Ali et al. 2016). Data sharing is helpful to a manager so that he/she may require further guide for minimizing resistance and encouraging contribution (Tan and Salo, 2021). For

successful investment in CKM, training personnel is helpful around the significance of data sharing (Ali et al. 2016). The results revealed that advanced educating is a missing factor to encourage personnel to utilize statistical tools for data analysis and mining in the context of CKM.

The managers noted that they can use available tools and databases rather than a wide-company flexible tool for CKM. The conceptual framework of dynamic capability and technological opportunism in the company was confirmed by the emergent themes. Customers' skill and motivation around CKM may result in technophobia, where the technology complexity may become uncontrollable (Khasawneh, 2018). The results of the current project verified the requirement of managers for adopting user-friendly data mining tools in the context of CKM and also for training of personnel, in a managerial level.

3.6 Emergent Themes

The emergent themes of this research were obtained from my exploring around the application of CKM tools in the target company. I determined emergent themes from the respondents by analyzing data originated from the in-depth interview and my interpretation. I assigned each theme to the conceptual framework. The insights were as follows (Appx. G):

Formal CKM Plan/Strategy

Designing/ Purchasing a CKM Tool

Education and Training of CKM procedures

Establishment, Maintaining, Promoting, and Cultivating Relationships

3.6.1 Emergent Theme 1: Formal CKM Plan/Strategy

The requirement for a wide-company plan/strategy, in marketing was the first theme. In line with the report of Hair et al. (2018), managers often ignore up-to-date marketing plans and strategies. Of the interviews, 100%, 100%, and 60% of the respondents acknowledged a necessity for a formal CKM plan/strategy, strategy, and marketing plant, respectively. Managers must carefully design and adopt marketing plans and strategic tactics for ensuring organizational sustainability and CE (Cartwright et al. 2021). Similarly, Abiodun and Kolade (2020) stated that business organizations must adopt comprehensive plans/strategies for paying competitive price, producing quality goods, and using the product's attractive packages. They also suggested that marketing managers must be focused on their capability to achieve the purposes for which they were

planned.

Examples of participants' statements were as follows:

“In my opinion, a plan is something that is developed by a team of experts and approved by the team leader; in fact, it is not just a personal plan.” (P1)

“Need for a company plan is not micro-management, but it gives me the right tools that permit the next levels to give the meaning of success.” (P2)

“In the first step, they must figure out the company capability since you cannot try to market what you don't have. Moreover, they must find the client preference, the appropriate partners, the technologies and tools entitled to attention over others, and finally the endeavor to assemble all of them in a package.” (P3)

“On the passive side, the trade journals included information collection and advertising. Moreover, we utilize marketing effort and trade show on the proactive side. CKM can go back to person-to-person relationships.” (P3)

“CKM is routine to be applied in our processes and products in a business sense. We often don't regularly gather data and sometimes it becomes too late. We collect on need if it were a vital practice. That is a sector of the process management that we should enhance on.” (P4)

“I think there is nothing formal in place ... for CKM or how to do it. This is an unconventional procedure” (P5)

As observed, a marketing plan is a key factor in the development of marketing tactics to be used in the different sectors of the B2B environments (Saura et al. 2021). The marketing mix (a foundation model for businesses around place, price, product, etc.) is a main topic for successful operation in B2B because some executives are resistant to the complexities and risks related to market events (Thabit and Raewf, 2018). Marketing leaders must follow the wide-company tactics such as CKM for supporting their marketing mix to achieve the admissible level of CE (Chaithanapat and Rakthin S, 2020).

Table 1. References Associated with Conventional CKM tactic

Emergent Themes	# respondents	(%)	of Time	Mentioned
Formal CKM Plan/Strategy	5	(100%)	73	
Strategy	5	(100%)	38	
Plan	3	(60%)	44	

3.6.2 Emergent Theme 2: Tools for CKM

The requirement for efficient CKM technologies and tool was the second emergent theme in this study. Several different elements disclosed why CKM technologies are either not in use or inappropriately used. As an initiate element, the role of manager around organizational psychology and CKM innovations is important. This can be observed in the dynamic capability and technological opportunism theories in the conceptual framework of the current work. Technological opportunism assumes that in competitive environments, marketing executives may keep the accessible technologies for escaping the outcomes of uncertainty (Chen et al. 2016). The dynamic capabilities also indicate that companies can be succeed by accessible sources in competitive markets. Lakshman et al. (2021) showed that dynamic managerial capabilities help companies to

identify paths towards competitive advantages that have low likelihood of irreversibility and stickiness and high likelihood of being practicable.

Examples of participants' statements were as follows:

“I do not think we have enough aristocracy to understand what is wrong with it”

(P1)

“It seems that they are hard to adopt, both in data collection and information recovering. This, in turn, makes them less efficient than we expect. It is more straightforward to search other tools of data collection and it inhibits the motivations to efficient application of the system.” (P2)

“I believe that we are being held to that because they presume by iteration, we detect a better way of doing it.” (P2)

“We have built the tools and they are available for my company. As seen, these tools are personal and not powerful, that may be a lack on the managerial side.”

(P3)

“I believe there are amazing things around everything that you know about the clients from career, objectives, professional focus, interests, children, spouse, job title, and name. These are parts of customer knowledge. You never capture information by CE, you obtain only data.” (P3)

“Actually, we don't have a specific tool, like that in artificial Intelligence, to really do that (CKM). There are some instruments accessible, but we haven't developed a standard procedure for CKM or anything like that.” (P4)

“The fact is that it (CKM) is something that we performed, but the next steps never have taken to fulfill it in practice.” (P5)

In the single case study, four of the marketing leaders stated the requirement for establishing efficient CKM tools, but nothing is available in the organization. The organizational objective, structure, culture, and psychology provide an opportunity to adopt the basis for CKM acceptance. However, we must keep in mind that technophobia may be a key element for promoting available tools related to CKM. Technophobia harbors the experiences and attitude with respect to the technology, where the technology complexities may become uncontrollable to managerial duties (Khasawneh, 2018). One of the key tools for improving CE by CKM is artificial intelligence. In looking at paths for transforming knowledge into individuals and organizations, i.e., sharing knowledge, artificial intelligence can encourage trends and relationships in the knowledge repositories for creating novel insights. Paschen et al. (2019) revealed the potential of artificial intelligence and its implication to create market knowledge in B2B markets.

Table 2. References Associated with CKM Tools

Emergent Themes		#	(%)	of	Mentioned Time
		respondents			
Data	Mining	4	(80%)		23
Repository					
	Data Mining	3	(60%)		15
	Repository	2	(40%)		6
	Software Package	2	(40%)		3
	Artificial Intelligence	1	(20%)		4

3.6.3 Emergent Theme 3: CKM educating and training

The requirement for educating and training programs in the context of CKM was the third theme. The studied company provides logistic support, training delivery and research, training, administration, and production simulator software. Their employees lack the educating enough for facilitating a user-friendly operation of CKM. Researchers reported that 85% of marketing managers believe that CKM-based information can assist in productivity, whereas others are not able to utilize CKM-based information (Haider and Kayani, 2021). Kumar et al., (2017) believe

that educating and training are key factors to convince marketing leaders for moving from classic marketing to CKM-based marketing.

Examples of participants' statements were as follows:

“We engage our clients; it is the only cause why it (CKM) operates... It seems to be working, although it is an unusual way to me” (P1)

“We should follow an educating plan to give value to the customers, in the clients’ eyes.” (P2)

“We insist in our educating for the managerial, engineering, and business personnel, all are present at the same educating.” (P3)

“A businessman should hold her/his skills. Albeit educating is a usual support for making us better ... I believe that retraining is a vital thing to make better how we are performing it (CKM).” (P3)

“We faced two challenges when selecting CKM tools, which one to use and how to implement it. That is going to need educating and training, and also indicating the profits of how to implement the CKM tools and why we are using them.” (P4)

“Every manager should adopt efficient methods like Web 3.0, etc., for sharing (CKM) data, finding motivations, and encouraging individuals to use it (CKM).” (P5)

B2B markets harbor a set of organizational and philosophies theories. As an instance, the information sharing derived from CE is a key interactive tactic for competitive advantages (Fidel et al., 2015). Behnam et al. (2021) evaluated empirically the impact of knowledge sharing on CE. They observed that CE's development can be facilitated by knowledge sharing. Procedures for knowledge sharing are helpful to improve marketing tactics in a competitive environment. Organizational trainings around the application of CKM technologies and tools may lead to support required for successful CE in the B2B marketplaces. Moreover, innovative educating for software packages contributes to apply CKM efficiently. Training and educating along with various classes/courses may help in shearing CKM patterns among the personnel. This, in turn, results in acknowledgment of the importance, confidence, and influence of investments on the data mining of CKM for upgrading supply chains (Ali et al., 2016).

As the future trend of Internet, Intelligence can result in improving the efficiency of marketing in B2B. Thus, the linked data theory, which is a possible path towards realizing the Web 3.0 is suggested to make the data interlinked. Using the concepts of Web 3.0 and the linked data technology in CKM has an ability to solve the challenges of knowledge sharing for achieving the interested knowledge as soon as possible (Lai et al. 2020).

Table 3. References Associated with Educating and Training

Emergent Themes	# (%) of respondents	Mentioned Time
Data Sharing	5 (100%)	22
Educating and Training	3 (60%)	10
Classes/Courses	2 (40%)	5

3.6.4 Emergent Theme 4: Improvement of Relationships in the B2B

Improvement of relationships was the fourth theme in this case study. Relationships in B2B are complicated and the customer voice can assist in better awareness of B2B. Lee (2021) exhibited that potent suppliers in the context of B2B efficiently control relationships with supply chain partners, end-users, and customers. Therefore, establishment of relationship tactics may lead to better understanding of customer differences, market preferences, and market special features (Ata and Toker, 2015). Youssef et al. (2018) indicated that customer's involvement, trust, commitment, and satisfaction are considered as requirements to CE and customer judgment is considered an outcome for CE. Thus, they suggested that CE in a B2B organization can be achieved by customer-centric procedures.

Examples of participants' statements were as follows:

“We often cooperate with others, not merely a technological ability to an opportunity.” (P1)

“It is really, really important the development a professional relationship where you know do they look at concept of diagrams, what they respond to, do they like to read the things, and their dislikes and likes.” (P2)

“The managers attempt to establish good relationship at the high level.” (P3)

“The clients are also considered as our competitors, a straightforward example at the trade show. We focus on main competitors, who we incorporate to or we sell to.” (P4)

“It is essential the establishment of a good relationship to the level with the reliability is no longer an obstacle and is really favorable to business.” (P5)

Four of the five marketing executives stated the significance of relationship establishing, maintaining, cultivating, and promoting in their markets. Relationships may be different in various contexts, thus Song et al., (2017) suggested that marketing leaders must hold long-term relationship in all contexts of marketing. Tuzunkan et al. (2018) suggested that CRM and relationship in a B2B organization is vital to make a difference in the globalizing world where

competitions are raising gradually. The authors indicated that relationships in B2B companies is quite vital to be support marketing activities remarkably, work efficiently, more productive, and thus enhance the sale volumes. Barac et al. (2017) highlighted that relationship has a high impact on B2B ecosystems. They also stated that managers doing business can benefit from the relationship management to improve their company's outcomes.

Table 4. References Associated with Improve Relationships in B2B

Emergent Themes	# respondents	(%)	of Time	Mentioned
Relationship Establishment	4	(80%)	20	
Relationship Cultivation	4	(80%)	16	
Relationship Maintaining	4	(80%)	14	
Relationship Promoting	4	(80%)	12	

3.7 Applications

3.7.1 Applications to Professional Practice

The current research increased the literature body for using CKM to improve CE in B2B companies. The results uncovered four main themes that provide the basis for adopting strategic tactics and future researches. Marketing leaders may employ these results to establish efficient organizational cultures and to consider CKM initiatives for improving CE. The emphasis on CKM tools for successful CE practices in B2B has been also highlighted by Chaithanapat and Rakthin, (2020). The results and suggestions, in turn, may strengthen the application of CKM tools at all organizational levels to engage the customers by the fulfillment of trust, satisfaction, commitment, as well as behavior, emotional, or cognitive engagements (Youssef et al. 2017).

The results harbored a synthesis of the managerial functions/activities as observed in the overview of literature as well as their supplementation with the outcomes of the recent work. In agreement with the Taghizadeh et al. (2018), the findings revealed the unpredicted reasons for inappropriate application of CKM, such as organizational psychology. Saura et al. (2021) highlighted the wants of both the end-users and B2B customers for achieving a safe and long-term relationship. Overall, the results exhibited the lack of wide organizational strategic tactics in adopting CKM tools to achieve customer's relationship and engagement.

The findings highlighted the requirement for educating and training to carry out CKM tactics successfully. In professional practices, marketing executives may obtain practical intuitions from the findings of the current research around the requirement for wide-organizational training and planning procedures associated with CKM and marketing tactics. The power is changing in client demand, competition, logistics, and technology; therefore, business managers require intellectual strategic measures. Continuous training strength the right application of CKM associated with product preferences, valuable information learning, B2B relationship cultivating, and improvement of CE (Saura, 2021).

3.7.2 Applications to Social Changes

The applications to social changes include the potentials for offering intuitions into CKM in order to get a better understand of client wants. The results of the current research may assist in social changes by addressing the marketing managers' need for embracing changes and staying current with hot trends in marketplaces. A critical impact of this project is for social changes in marketing operations that may reveal an intuition that when customer behavior change, so must marketing strategic tactics. Moreover, the business communities may explore the novel knowledge to get intuitions into client behavior. These new intuitions, in turn, may result in product/service innovation for improving CE.

3.8 Reflections

My experience in this project was an amazing process, which provided an excellent opportunity for learning from teammates, for expanding my competency to educate at an academic level, and for gaining a better understand of the CKM technology in a B2B marketplace. This process also contributed to remarkable insights on the subject of study from different prospects. As started the research, I was wondered to uncover that my study case, some managers in a well-known organization, did not use CKM strategic tactics and training practices into personnel. I astonished how this company became successful in its market.

I involved in fact-finding with the aim of ignoring from personal bias. To ensure consistency, I followed the protocol of interview. The participants answered honestly to the questions of interview and shared their managerial tactics, which were achievements of years of experience. After data analysis, I was wondered at the obstacles in the way to adopt and use CE. Trust, individual perspectives, relationships, communications, and technologies were unpredicted answers from the marketing managers.

3.9 Suggestions

3.9.1 Suggestions for Practice

The results and suggestions may strengthen the application of CKM to engage customers associating with all B2B supply chain partners and organizational levels. Marketing executives may consider the strategic tactics obtained from the emergent themes along with their knowledge management procedures to develop official CKM tactics. Fidel et al. (2015) indicated that each official CKM tactic is an important source for progressive successes in marketplaces. The themes uncovered in this study include development of customized CKM tools for the niche markets, continues training for CKM innovations, creation and execution an official procedure, fostering relationships in B2B, and designing a comprehensive marketing plan. Using an updated portal of supply chain and customer to organizational website provide options for feed-backing that may be helpful for product innovation, making decision, organizational learning, and improvement of CE.

I suggested that leaderships hire a chief marketing/information officer responsible for continuous training for knowledge delivery at all personnel levels, knowledge sharing, marketing strategic tactics, learning initiatives, and user-friendly wide-organizational CKM tools. Organizational manager may review strategic tactics for CKM initiatives with the chief marketing/information officer

every two years to discover innovative supply chain partners and trend insights. Aligning strategic development applications with CKM tactics, every three to five years may enhance product innovations and make better CE. B2B managers may change CKM procedures for developing product and profit from expanded markets.

The results from the current research are essential to marketing executives interested in engaging their customers, i.e., CE.

3.9.2 Suggestions for Future Studies

I uncovered what CKM tactics marketing leaders required for improving CE in this single-case study. Suggestions for further researches include addressing the study's restrictions: geographical location, the small size of the population, time limitations, and specifically. I utilized a niche market, five participants at different managerial levels, and a single B2B organization. The study's findings open an interesting way towards further explorations for a portable presentation of B2B CKM in other market segments and populations.

Since the current study was focused on acknowledge sharing, further researches may lead to valuable insights for increasing data quality in supply chain partnerships and for using CKM in marketing tactics to engage customers. Because CKM strategic tactics that managers use to improve CE are flexible, therefore there

is a requirement to carry out explorations in different marketplaces on larger scales. Complementary research may validate the strength of the current project through larger sample size, various geographic regions, using compatible participants, and performing long-range explorations. Marketing executives in their organizations may put the study's outcomes under consideration to determine the obstacles to CKM accomplishment and also use them for supporting long-term marketing strategic tactics.

Conclusion

In spite of its restrictions, the current research made multiple important contributions to the future studies on using CKM in order to improve CE in B2B. The data collected in the recent project was a consequence of semi-structured interview with five marketing executives. I analyzed the data to identify the strategic tactics required for the improvement of CE in B2B markets. The emerging themes discovered in this study permitted suggestions that may lead to a range of innovations. The suggestions may enhance CKM practices in the company and support the information sharing, sources, and ideas adaptable to B2B environments. As marketing executives endeavor to develop simulation and training products with advanced technological infrastructures and professional experts, and adoption of CKM strategic tactics may improve CE in the company. Strategic tactics in CKM may incorporate the training procedures for sharing experiences and encouraging relationships. The training procedures provide an opportunity to the personnel that profit from the abilities involved in engaging customers. Success in using CKM tactics needs the leader support with professional training.

This research disclosed that marketing strategies must harbor efficient CKM tools for communication and an obligation for adopting them to develop the latest simulation/training products according to CE.

Appendixes

Appx. A: Interview Queries

The queries cover the CKM in marketing strategic tactics and data collection methods to response the fundamental question: How do you express your experience and perception with CKM technology and tools?

Interview questions:

1. How would you describe CKM?
2. How you utilize CKM to connect with clients?
3. What tactics do you utilize to handle CKM?
4. What is your experience around the usage of CKM tactics?
5. What tactics do you think have a positive impact on your company's method to CKM?
6. How would you describe CE?
7. What do you speculate is required by B2B leaders to engage clients?
8. What do you think are obstacles to CE?
9. How does your decision apply to CE?

10. What tactics do you think would make better your company's method to CE?
11. How do you think CKM tactics have an impact on your company's method to CE?
12. How would you define your supply chain in your company?
13. What tactics do you utilize to handle the supply chain in your company?
14. How do you utilize CKM technology to contact with clients in supply chains in your company?
15. What tactics do you think have a further positive impact on your company's method to CKM around supply chains?
16. Finally, what else want to tell that may relate to your experience concerning CE as well as CKM?

Appx. B: the Protocol of Interview

Interviewer MAYINUER.DILIXIATI

Instruction:

- Describe to the interviewees the objective of the research.
- Assure the interviewees' sign the release form and warrant confidentiality.
- Keep an eye on your body language to assure the answers have been not affected by you.
- Record interviews and allocate a number to each one.
- Ask queries and explore the answers to get deeper meaning.
- Record answers, and precisely transcribe.
- Thanks to the interviewees for their contribution.
- Call the interviewees to finalize the process of participant validation.

Appx. C: The text of E-mail to IAA Group in LinkedIn

Hello, my name is MAYINUER.DILIXIATI, a master student with Università Politecnica delle Marche (UNIVPM), and I'm a member of IAA group in LinkedIn. I am performing research by using semi-structured interview with marketing professionals in a single company around the strategic tactics in Customer Knowledge Management (CKM). I would like to invite several B2B leaders from an industry organization (IAA group in LinkedIn) as my target population. My objective is to explore the CKM practices around CE in a B2B paradigm. Each interview lasts about one hour. I record each interview for exact transcription and finally destroy them to ensure the confidentiality of company information.

Please note the following:

*Nothing from my research or these interviews can be assigned to the organization or the participant.

*All reports related to my research assure no data traceable back to the organization or the participant.

*Everything that we talk about in these interviews is secret entirely.

I thank your help in accomplishing my study. Please email me at mahinur.dilshat@gmail.com with your approval as well as suggestion.

Thank you,

Mayinuer Dilixiati

Appx. D: B2B Organizational Invitation

I am an academic student performing a thesis project on the CKM-related factors that influence B2B markets. I appreciate your contribution in my research by carry out face-to-face interviews with your marketing leaders.

I make sure that all answers would be secret and only utilized for my degree thesis work. Personally identifiable information is not included in the questions of interview. Please offer a time for contribution because of restricted research period. If you feel that this time is not acceptable to your company, would you please suggest other CKM-equipped B2B companies?

I thank your help in accomplishing my study.

Thank you,

Mayinuer Dilixiati

Email: mahinur.dilshat@gmail.com

Appx. E: Marketing leader Acknowledgement

June 1, 2021

Dear , Dilixiati

Based on the overview of your research proposal, I agree to perform your project entitled **CKM towards engaging B2B organization' customers**. As part of this project, I authorize you to interview marketing managers familiar to *Business-to-business, customer knowledge management, customer engagement* and autonomy to make decisions for data collection, participant validation and observation, and results dissemination activities. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own direction.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this sitting and that this project complies with company politics.

I understood that data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student supervising staff without permission from our company.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Direct: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Appx. F: The Form of Consent

You are invited to participate in a research project evaluating the strategic tactics of CKM. I'm a marketing student at UNIVPM , performs this degree thesis work as researcher. I'm inviting marketing executives to take part in the research who are familiar with CKM. To permit you to know about this project before deciding whether to participate, this form gives you.

The objective of the study:

The objective of the recent project is to disclose marketing leaders' thoughts, perceptions, and opinions around the application of CKM tactics for engaging customers.

Procedures:

If you consent to be in the recent project, you will be questioned to:

- Participating in a one-on-one interview, lasting about 1 h per interview.
- Answering 16 questions around your experience with CKM strategic tactics.
- Consenting to being recorded for ensuring accuracy.
- Reviewing the transcript of your interviews for ensuring exactness.

Sample questions in this research are here:

1. How would you describe CKM?
2. What tactics do you utilize to handle CKM?
3. How would you describe CE?
4. How does your decision apply to CE?

Voluntary in the project:

The recent project is completely voluntary. No one treat differently you if you decide not to be in the project. Everyone respect your preference of whether you select to be in the project.

Risk and of Benefit Being in the project:

Contribution in the recent project includes some distress that may be experienced in daily life. Yet contribution in the project would not expose any risks to your well-being or safety. Moreover, the project may uncover the psychological marketing personality.

Payment:

The recent project does not include any payment.

Privacy:

The researcher will not utilize your private details for any purpose outside of this research. Anything that can identify you and/or your organization will not cover in the final report. Voice recording will be typed by OneNote and finally destroyed.

Question and Contact:

If you have question, you can contact me by e-mail at mahinur.dilshat@gmail.com

Consent Statement:

I read the above-mentioned details and I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Appx. G: Themes of the research

Emergent Themes	# (%) of respondents	Mentioned Time
Conventional CKM tactic		
Formal CKM Plan/Strategy	5 (100%)	73
Strategy	5 (100%)	38
Plan	3 (60%)	44
CKM Tools		
Data Mining Repository	4 (80%)	23
Data Mining	3 (60%)	15
Repository	2 (40%)	6
Software Package	2 (40%)	3
Artificial Intelligence	1 (20%)	4
Educating and Training		
Data Sharing	5 (100%)	22
Educating and Training	3 (60%)	10
Classes/Courses	2 (40%)	5
Improving Relationships in B2B		
Relationship Establishment	4 (80%)	20
Relationship Cultivation	4 (80%)	16
Relationship Maintaining	4 (80%)	14
Relationship Promoting	4 (80%)	12

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